these assumptions, I conceive as follows the development of the operations of our armies.

French and The enemy forces will be *held in the*

ır^the offensive sector *Arras-Bapaume* and in that between the Oise and the Somme by means of attacks carried out respectively by the Armies under your orders and by the French forces.

During this time, a sudden attack carried out upon another part of the French Front will lead to a break-

through. This will be immediately followed by a broadening out into the decisive battle.

This battle, the effects of which will not fail to make themselves felt along the whole extent of our front, will bring about an exploitation over a wide area[1] in which the French Armies and the British Armies will take part with all the means they can bring to bear,

Constitution of the Mass of Manoeuvre.— The success of our operations will thus depend essentially upon the mass of manoeuvre.

For the reasons which I have given you above (homogeneity, cohesion, instruction, command) I consider that this force must be distinct from the large units charged with carrying out the attack to the north of the Oise and with making the break-through.

Now it is impossible for me in the present state of the division of the front between our Allied Armies to form this reserve of 27 divisions.

To allow me to make it, it is indispensable that

Brıtishto the British Armies shall relieve an important part of the

French troops
more°front which hold the front
between the
Somme and the Oise, and that in this
connection they shall put at my disposal
the French